

Appl. No. 09/853,160
Ammdt. dated March 24, 2004
Reply to Office Action of Oct. 16, 2003

REMARKS

This response ("Amendment") should be entered and it is respectfully suggested that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The undersigned requests an interview with the Examiner.

Claims 1 and 2 define unobvious inventions over Goto et al. in view of Sato et al.

A speaker grille-integrated foamed thermoplastic resin molding for automotive interior comprising a base portion and a speaker grilled having a plurality of opening holes wherein at least the base portion has a foamed layer and the foamed layer in the base portion has a density ρ of not greater than 0.6 g/cm^3 and an average expansion ratio of the speaker grille is 1 to 1.3 times, wherein the speaker grille is formed in one piece with the base portion from the same material as the base portion so as to be surrounded by the base portion.

Arguendo, it appears that the Office Action relies on Goto et al. as follows:

- (1) Goto et al. discloses a door trim panel (Figure 7) containing a speaker grille with a plurality of holes (Figure 7, #452);
- (2) As can be seen in Figures 7 and 8, the resin molding contains a base portion (Figure 8, #30) in which the speaker grille is formed and surrounded by the base portion (Figure 7, #452 and 30); and
- (3) The base portion is formed by polypropylene foam (column 6, lines 28-32 and lines 36-38).

The Examiner has opined that the only difference between the claimed product and the door trim panel is that in the claimed product the foamed layer in the base portion

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having a density of not greater than 0.6 g/cm³ and an average expansion ratio of the speaker grille is 1 to 1.3 times.

The Examiner is mistaken. For instance, especially as to item (3) in her analysis of Goto et al., the Examiner apparently has the view, based on the description in column 6, lines 28-32 and lines 36-38, that the door trim panel of Goto et al. has a base portion which is formed by a polypropylene foam. However, the description of column 6, lines 28-32, is an explanation about a skin material employed. Goto et al. discloses that the skin material has an inner layer 202 made from polypropylene resin. Goto et al. does not teach a base portion having a foamed layer.

Now merely because separate elements are allegedly separately mentioned in prior art, even if the Examiner's thesis is correct, which it is not, there remains an unanswered question. Where is the motivation to modify the Goto et al. reference to teach what it doesn't disclose and combine the non-existent teaching with the Sato et al. reference? Such evidence is not seen in this record. Please accordingly reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Applicants also refer the reader to the Remarks presented in their September 4, 2003 Amendment.

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Having addressed all matters, please reconsider and issue a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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